

The Moonlight

By Noah Buchholz

Translated by John Lee Clark

That night the moon rose
in the window. Its light
touched the pane and spread
over the floor. The girls
climbed out of their beds
and gathered in the glow,
where their hands came alive.
Their chatter filled their chests
with such gladness it flowed
out past the sentry girl
at the door and down
the corridor until it struck
the matron's ears. She rocked
forward, enraged, and thundered up
the corridor. The sentry girl
gave the alarm. They flew
for their beds. The matron
burst in. Her arm swung
and connected. A girl dropped.
The hand of the moon
went to the girl, tapping
her on the shoulder, tapping
to no avail. It withdrew,
gliding back to the window
and out. When the sun
came up, its blaze seething
into the floor, the girls
gathered again at the window.
They watched as the gardener
dug a hole. His shovel
thrust firmly in the ground,
he lifted a covered figure
and let drop. Its arms
were crossed as it tumbled
to the bottom. The gardener
grimaced and covered the hole.
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Translated from the American Sign Language